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ABSTRACT

A study examined six third-grade basal readers (from the years 1969, 1986, and 1993) to determine whether there has been a significant change in the portrayal of women characters throughout the years. Results: (1) showed more female main characters in the 1993 textbook sampled than in the textbooks from earlier periods; (2) found that female characters were more active (than passive) subjects in the stories; (3) showed significant change in the roles/activities of the female characters; and (4) found that the number of female versus male biographies in the readers became more equitable. (Contains a table of data and 22 references. Appendixes present guidelines for eliminating sex stereotypes in published materials, and a list of books most frequently read aloud in kindergaraten through sixth grade, noting the sex of main protagonists.) (SR)

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Women's Roles In Basal Readers

by

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for the Master of Arts Degree
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ABSTRACT

This was a study of six third grade basal readers. The readers examined were taken from the years 1969, 1986 and 1993. The stories were studied to determine if there has been a significant change in the portrayal of women characters throughout the years. The hypothesis that changing roles have not been reflected in current materials was rejected.

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I would like to thank my parents for their continuous encouragement by instilling in me the idea that I was capable of doing anything I set my mind to. I would like to thank my sister and brothers who listened, critiqued and supported me throughout the past few years. Thank you to my son, Billy, who helped me learn to become very efficient over this last year! Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Albert J. Mazurkiewicz (Chairperson of the Department of Communication Sciences at Kean College) for his guidance and knowledge in helping me through this thesis.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this paper to my husband, Maurice Caldarola, who shares of his time, his knowledge, and his patience with anything that is important to me. He offered encouragement and support when it was very much needed.

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Textbooks are a critical tool in the education of children. The books reflect a curriculum that the school district believes in. Therefore, it is very important that the materials chosen foster a sense of independence, respect, and equality for all people.

In 1985, Kathleen W. Bordelon pointed out that sexism in textbooks had not really been examined until the 1970's. In 1972, a committee entitled the Task Force of the National Organization of Women conducted a study of reading textbooks. The study showed that male characters far outnumbered female characters. In addition, the male characteristics were much more desirable than those qualities attached to the female characters. The men were depicted as adventuresome, imaginative, and clever. The females were depicted as passive, dependent, and having a limited range of interests.

Bordelon described several studies throughout the 1970's which continuously showed that although publishers said they were trying to reduce sexism in reading materials, very little was being changed. Bordelon summarized another study conducted in 1978 by Frasher and Frasher. They attempted to find out if children would prefer a story with traditional sex-typed content and if the childrens' comprehension levels would change when reading a traditional or non-traditional sex-typed content story. The

results were fascinating. Comprehension scores were higher for both sexes for the stories written with non-traditional content. The sex of the character did not appear to have an impact; only the content of the story affected comprehension.

In 1992, a report was put out by Rafael Olivares, and Nancy Rosenthal which indicated that official policies and laws have been introduced into the workforce and in school over the past 20 years, yet these same equitable policies have not been promoted in the classrooms. Olivares and Rosenthal reviewed research that emphasized the impact of gender socialization in the home and in school. Most often, childrens' role models are their parents and teachers. In their review, they concentrated on 1) teacher-student interactions and student-student interactions 2) classroom materials and classroom activities and 3) teachers' and adults' perceptions of childrens' gender and their modeling of sex-stereotyping. Olivares and Rosenthal reported on many studies. They gathered information which revealed that teachers spent more time interacting with the boys and it was found that boys were given more detailed instructions. With student to student relationships, Bianchi and Bakeman (1978) found that children in an open and independent setting were more likely to socialize with the opposite sex than in a traditional kindergarten setting.

In the classroom materials, it was found that males continue to outnumber the females as characters in the stories. It was also noted that womens' roles were very limited along with their range of emotions.

Since many young children do model their teachers, it is important that the teachers choose their language and materials very carefully. In 1992, Olivares and Rosenthal looked at many studies and concluded that many teachers do, unconsciously, channel children into sex-appropriate play areas and activities.

Sylvia-Lee Tibbetts wrote an article in 1978 entitled "Wanted:Data to prove that sexist reading material has an impact on the reader". Tibbetts gathered a great deal of research that stated the concern about sexism in basal readers for young children. The article stated that basal readers are used at a time in a child's life when they are very impressionable. Attitudes and social values are conveyed through these stories. Beach (1976) argued that we cannot just change the books to correct sexism. We must also change attitudes and behaviors in society. Considering that children come to school with prior knowledge, one must assume these thoughts affect how they comprehend a story.

Sara G. Zimet, the author of the 1972 book, What Children Read in School, discusses what type of world we should present to our children, as they are reading. She believes that if we present realistic themes/roles in the stories, children would be able to relate school-home situations. Children would be reassured that these roles, cultures, occupations, feelings are acceptable. Zimet states that "Interpersonal and work roles for both sexes should reflect what is as well as what should be. For example, women characters would be engineers, doctors, reporters, scientists, taxi drivers, letter carriers, secretaries, teachers, nurses and store

clerks, as well as mothers, maiden aunts, sisters and daughters." The same holds true for men and their various roles.

The roles of women in society have changed quite a bit over the past 20 years. We have seen these changes reflected in magazine articles, television shows, advertisements, and in the business force. To enlighten the young population of today, it would appear that these changes should be reflected in the stories and literature that they read, since role models in young peoples' lives and in books have the power to change gender-related bias. Additional research is needed to find out if, in fact, women's changing roles are depicted in material being read by children.

Hypothesis

To provide additional information on this topic, the following study was undertaken. For the purposes of this study it was hypothesized that the changing roles of the female characters have not been reflected in modern versions of the basal reader.

Procedures

Six third-grade basal readers at three different periods were randomly identified and examined in this study. With Skies and Wings/All Sorts of Things, by Ginn and Company, represent the year 1969. New Leaves/Bright Wonders, by the Economy Company, represent the year 1986. Catch a Sunflake/Sing It To The Sea, Macmillan/MacGraw Hill School Company, represent the year 1993.

A checklist was created to keep a tally of the number of

female main characters versus the number of male main characters, the roles of the characters, and the human qualities assigned to those characters (as being active or passive). Active referred to those characters who portrayed bravery, ambition, initiative to solve problems and/or intelligence. Passive referred to those characters who were followers, insecure or perhaps just let things happen to them in the story without taking action. In addition, there was a tally taken of the number of biographies, articles and animal stories in each basal. The purpose of this tally was to provide a complete picture of the contents of each text. In the tables provided, the entry for the number of stories only refers to those stories with males/females as the main characters (not animal stories).

The checklist results were examined to determine if there has been a significant role change for women in the stories currently being read by students as opposed to earlier periods. In addition, this study sought to determine whether women displayed a broader range of emotions than in earlier periods and had the ability to solve problems.

Results

Table one details the findings of each series in the period 1969-1993.

TABLE I
Sample Findings Across the Period 1969-1993

	1969: GINN & COMPANY		1986: ECONOMY COMPANY		1993: MACMILLAN/MCGRAW-HILL	
	WITH SKIES & WINGS	ALL SORTS OF THINGS	NEW LEAVES	BRIGHT WONDERS	CATCH A SUNFLAKE	SING IT TO THE SEA
# Stories	13	16	12	13	6	6
# Female Main Characters	4 (31%)	3 (19%)	8 (67%)	7 (54%)	5 (83%)	3 (50%)
# Male Main Characters	8	16	5	7	3	5
Females						
Passive	2	1	3	5	2	0
Active	2	2	5	2	3	3
Males						
Passive	2	4	1	2	2	1
Active	6	12	5	5	1	4
Biographies	3 Male 0 Female	0	1 Male 1 Female	1 Male 1 Female	8 Male 8 Female (50%)	4 Male 9 Female (69%)
Articles	2	3	3	5	3	5
Animal Stories	5	3	4	3	4	3
Examples of Roles Portrayed By Female Characters	o Caring for animals o Being saved o Mothering o Cooking o Pretending o Calling police to notify them of danger		o Reporting o Hiking o Solving problems o Building inventions o Painting o Discovering	o Skating o Scientific	o Scientific o Quilting o Problem solving o World traveler o Caring for animals o Confronting a town council	

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This study yielded findings that demonstrated differences in male/female character ratios. There were more female main characters identified in the 1993 book sampled than there had been in earlier periods (from a low of 19% to a high of as much as 83%) Furthermore, the females were more active subjects in the stories. In the 1969 With Skies and Wings/All Sorts of Things females comprised 31% and 19% of the total number of stories. Males made up 62% and 100% of the total number of stories. In comparison, the 1986 New Leaves/Bright Wonders readers showed percentage rates of 67% and 54% for females and 50% and 54% for males. The 1993 Catch a Sunflake/Sing It To The Sea showed results of 83% and 50% for both females and males.

In the area of human qualities (the characters being passive or active) there was more of an effort to show that females and males are capable of having different feelings and that both are able to solve problems and be creative. In total, from the 1969 basal readers, 3 females were depicted in passive situations, and 4 females were in active situations. The males were depicted in 6 passive situations and 18 active. The totals from 1986 showed 8 passive females and 7 active females. The males were depicted as 3 passive subjects and 10 active. The totals from the 1993 series showed 2 passive females and 6 active females. The males were shown to be 3 passive and 5 active. These numbers showed more of a balance in the portrayal of characters to the readers.

This study has shown there was also a significant change in the roles/acitivities of the female characters between 1969 and 1993. As depicted in the table provided, the 1969 editions portrayed female characters caring for animals, being saved, mothering, or pretending. In the 1986 editions, females were involved in building a project, hiking, solving mysteries, and skating for example. In the 1993 readers, a female took a trip around the world, a child confronted the town council and mayor, and 2 authors of one selection were both female scientists.

Finally, the number of female versus male biographies in the readers was significant. Not only did the numbers become more equitable, but the female biographies chosen were those of a scientist, painter, and several authors. In the early readers of 1969, only a total of 3 male biographies were included for both books. In the 1986 readers, 3 female biographies and 2 male biographies were presented to the students. In the 1993 books, a very different approach was taken. No lengthy biographies were offered, but at the end of each type of selection, a short biography was presented, along with a photograph, to the readers. These included 17 female authors and 12 male authors.

It should be noted that the layouts of the 1993 basal readers differed greatly from those books of the earlier periods. In addition to stories and articles, they contained suggestions for books from the library, maps, tables, graphs and fun facts pertaining to the subject matter of some of the stories.

Conclusions

It is evident that publishers are making more of an effort to equalize the female/male character role models. A great deal has changed for women in the past 20-30 years and it is important for children to be aware of the possibilities which exist for them.

Characters in books inspire and motivate, along with confirming how things are in this world. The more realistic role models that exist, the more accepting the society will become. Books alone will not change prejudice or sexism, but they will certainly help. Parents and teachers have the responsibility to choose a variety of books and make children aware of inequities if/when they exist, in addition to helping them realize their fullest potential.

Women's Roles in Basal Readers: Related Research

Judith Stevinson Hillman conducted a study comparing children's books from the 1930's to the books of the mid 1960's - mid 1970's (Hillman refers to these time periods as the early period and the recent period). By the time this study was conducted, in 1974, many changes had taken place in previous years in regards to women; legislation about women's rights, labor force, and a growing number of women's groups dealing with aspects of American life. Hillman questioned whether these major changes in society were being reflected in children's books, throughout this thirty year time period. The study was based on her belief that literature plays a major part in childrens' lives as motivators and role models. Books act as indirect experiences for children. Therefore, it is important that they can identify with different life situations and role models. Hillman studied three aspects of these books; the number of females versus males, the diversity of occupational roles for both sexes, and the emotions and behaviors given to male and female characters. Her first hypothesis stating that there were more male characters was confirmed. Females represented 35.3% in the early period and 38.8% of the recent period stories versus 64.7% and 61.2% male characters in the stories. The numbers had improved for the females, but was still not at an equitable distribution.

Hillman's second hypothesis referring to the occupational roles of both sexes was confirmed. As predicted, in both periods, the men were involved if a greater range of jobs, associated with

power and prestige. In the early period, 169 occupations were listed for men, and 30 were listed for women. In the recent period, about 150 jobs were performed by men, and only 39 jobs by the women.

Hillman's third hypothesis was denied. She predicted that the same behaviors/emotions used to characterize males and females, in the early period stories, would probably still exist in the recent period texts. In the early period, males were described to be more physically and verbally aggressive, more competent, and angry. The females were more nurturing, affectionate, dependent, and displayed fantasy and sadness. In the recent period, males and females displayed verbal aggression. Fantasy and nurturance were attributed to both sexes. Males displayed surprise and females were allowed to display anger and curiosity. Females showed less dependence and excitement.

Hillman's study concluded that there was some minimal change in the children's textbooks, over a thirty year period. Still, those changes did not reflect the reality in 1970's society. She suggested that perhaps other forms of media, such as television and films should be studied in the same fashion.

Many of the basal textbook selections are written in a narrative format. Narration and description are forms of writing which expect the reader to respond in an emotional or personal manner. In 1978, Diane W. Kyle questioned whether publishers/writers had responded to the criticisms of the 1960's that sexist and racist stereotypes were prevalent in readers. Kyle

studied the new preprimers of 1978 and found positive and negative aspects. A few stories portrayed female characters who were capable, independent problem-solvers. Some of the stories involving boys allowed them to display emotions, unlike the textbooks of the past.

Even though the preprimers showed some advancement, there was still quite a discrepancy in the number of males versus the number of females portrayed as main characters or as groups in a story. Another problem was that children in the stories led very carefree lives with minimal problems. The problems did not include real life situations having to do with family structures or racial disturbances. Kyle pointed out that the subjects often dressed alike and lived in the same types of neighborhoods. Also, the stories did not deal with adoption, divorce, or alternate family situations. If parents were shown, the father was playing with the children or working in the yard. The mother would be shopping or taking care of the children. If the women were in the background pictures of the stories, they were shown in diverse roles(occupations), but the males were not shown to be in nontraditional roles, such as nursing or clerical work.

Kyle also looked at sixth grade basals as a comparison of content. It was noted that adults were portrayed in various occupational roles but these adults did not also have a parental role in the story! Therefore, the message was conveyed that it is not feasible to combine parental and occupational roles. Kyle concluded that the publishers/writers have attempted to update

their texts, yet the collections still do not reflect reality.

Marylee Stull Ashby and Bruce C. Wittmaier conducted a study with fourth grade girls and boys as their subjects(yet,they were mainly interested in the effects on the girls). They examined Newberry Award winning books from the 1930's and from the 1970's. They also looked at reading books of the 1970's. It was found that the female characters were outnumbered by the male characters and the female roles were very limited. Ashby and Wittmaier set out to determine if girls' attitudes would be changed when exposed to stories about women with nontraditional jobs. They also wanted to know if the female readers would use traditionally male adjectives to describe men **and** women after being exposed to the stories.

As the nontraditional group, fifteen girls and sixteen boys were chosen. This group listened to two nontraditional stories. Following the stories, they were asked to fill out an adjective and a job checklist. Next to each adjective, or job, the student labeled it as male, female, or both applicable. The traditional group consisting of fourteen girls and twelve boys followed the same procedure, but after listening to two traditional stories. There was also a picture choice test, where the student viewed pictures of a woman in various occupations. The students were to choose which jobs, or pictures, they felt the woman would be the happiest doing.

The results confirmed what Ashby and Wittmaier had expected. The nontraditional stories which were read **did** have an impact on the students who listened to them. On the picture tests, these

students chose fewer traditional pictures for the women. The adjective ratings were less stereotyped. The jobs ratings showed a slight difference between the groups in classifying the female or male occupations. This was not a very extensive study, yet Ashby and Wittmaier have suggested that we had better seriously consider the impact that books have on children. As they pointed out, "One cannot expose girls to sexist books throughout childhood and then grant them a "free" choice of the role they want as an adult because such choices will not actually be free." We may hope that through education, children will learn about their options and what they could aspire to be as an adult.

Kathryn P. Scott and Shirley Feldman-Summers conducted a study in 1979, entitled "Children's Reactions to Textbook Stories in Which Females Are Portrayed in Traditionally Male Roles". They had 67 females and 44 males participate from third/fourth grade classrooms in a suburban, white, middle-class school in Bellevue, Washington. Each of the three groups formed, read a total of eight stories over a four week period. There were two versions of each story. One version was with a female main character and one version was written with a male main character. The story content remained exactly the same except for the pronouns and name of the character. Each story centered around a young person who assumed a role (thought to be traditionally male). For example, the person was a problem solver, explorer, achiever, or a leader. Group one read six stories with a female main character and two stories with a male main character. Group two read six stories with a male main

character and two stories with a female main character. Group three read four stories with a male main character and four stories with a female main character. Following the reading of each story, the children were asked to answer several questions.

The results revealed that after exposing children to successful female characters in nontraditional roles, childrens' perceptions changed about who could participate in such jobs. Scott and Summers emphasized that these children did not meet a role model in person. By merely reading about someone, the children's generalizations were changed regarding that particular occupation. In regards to story evaluations, the boys and girls enjoyed certain stories regardless if the main character was male or female. Other studies, outside of this, mention that boys do not enjoy stories in which the main character is a female. Scott and Summers suggest that perhaps the boys enjoy the character (male or female), but not the **activity** of the character in the story.

The authors realized that other major influences exist in children's lives when it comes to their perceptions of sex roles (parents, television, peers) and the child's view may be changed once again. Also, after reading a selection, no one is really sure how long this impression may last. Scott and Summers suggest that maybe it is necessary to present more of these types of nontraditional stories over a longer period of time.

In 1981, William H. Rupley, Jesus Garcia, and Bonnie Longnion published their study entitled "Sex role portrayal in reading materials: Implications for the 1980's". They took into account

that the wave of equal representation became an important textbook issue during the early to middle 1970's. The textbooks which had been published during 1974-76 time period had actually began their work in the early 1970's (editing, writing, printing) in order to be **ready** for a publication date of 1974-76. Therefore, Rupley, Garcia, and Longnion felt a review of 1976-78 was necessary.

To begin the research, the team requested a sample reader from eight publishers. The publishers either included sex-role guidelines in the teacher's editions or they provided a written statement explaining the guidelines.(see Appendix A for an example of 1981 Houghton Mifflin Publishing Company's guidelines). This type of information had not been available years ago, which would indicate progress was being made by the publishers, in comparison to earlier studies. It was found that there were twice as many male figures than female figures, in the 1976 basal stories. In the 1978 series, the male and female figures was almost equal.

Rupley, Garcia, and Longnion concluded with several recommendations. First, teachers must preview stories for the children. If the stories are sexist or inappropriate, the teacher needs to initiate a discussion in order to enlighten the students and make them more aware. Secondly, the teacher needs to present a balanced picture of the contributions of men and women.

In 1987, Mary E. Hitchcock and Gail E. Tompkins examined six recent basal readers to determine if sexism still existed. They concentrated on the number of male versus female main characters and the variation of occupations for female characters.

It was found that the number of male main characters dropped from 61% to 18% and the number of female main characters remained the same at 17%. The most increase was found in the "other" category ("other" meaning a role shared by a male and a female or a personified animal) from 23% to 65% . In 1987, far more opportunities were available to women than in the 1960's and 1970's. This development was shown in the six recent textbooks. Women were depicted in such jobs as; reporters, authors, physicians, and many more. Hitchcock and Tompkins also found that many more young girls were main characters. They suggested that perhaps publishers felt that students would identify more with this age group and their problems, rather than with adult women.

In a 1990 study called "Dick and Jane in 1989", Piper Purcell and Lara Stewart replicated a 1972 study called "Dick and Jane as Victims"(done by Women on Words and Images). The 1972 study had reported that the number of boy-centered stories outnumbered the girl-centered stories 5:1. Adult male main characters compared to adult female main characters resulted in a 3:1 ratio. Animal stories showed a 2:1 ration of males/females. Folktales were also studied within the readers and they were found to be dominated by male characters 4:1.

Purcell and Stewart examined 62 readers used in 3 Texas cities. Overall, the results showed much less male dominance than in the stories studied in 1972. The 1990 ratio of adult male main characters to adult female main characters was 4:3. It was found that girls were still portrayed in some stories in traditional

female roles. Another theme Purcell and Stewart found throughout the stories was that of a young girl being saved/rescued by the help of a pet or wild animal. The boys did not have to rely on animals to help them out of trouble. On the other hand, some of the stories showed a boy babysitting or working in the home, or a girl involved in solving a mystery or saving lives.

The 1972 study had reported a concern about the number of male versus female centered biographies. They counted 169 male biographies and 27 female biographies. The concern was rooted in the idea that young girls also need role models to admire. This seemed to be corrected by the time the 1990 study was done. Purcell and Stewart reported 56 female biographies and 48 male biographies.

In regards to animal stories, the 1972 study found 62 male animals as main characters, versus 17 female animals. There were very little mixed gender stories. The 1990 study still showed more male animal characters, but only 42% of the stories were of one gender. Many of the stories were written in mixed gender.

Finally, Purcell and Stewart did not find any significant change in the selection of folktales. Many of them were still male centered tales. Females consisted of 30% of the tales in 1990, rather than 21% of the tales in 1972.

Purcell and Stewart concluded that textbooks have mirrored the changes in real life, but still a few items need to be addressed. Boys have been allowed to cry and perform such tasks as babysitting, but many times they are still portrayed in stories as

a person who does not have a full range of emotions. In regards to girls, they still need more working role models. As stated by Purcell and Stewart, "By improving the quality of role models, we improve the quality of children's lives, and we improve the quality of tomorrow."

In 1987, Nancy J. Smith, M. Jean Greenlaw, and Carolyn J. Scott conducted a study based on the read aloud books chosen by 254 teachers in grades K-6 in Texas and Kansas. They discussed how the literary environment is now changing within the classrooms. More discussions are taking place, and reading/writing is being combined. Teachers are read alouding quite a bit to students of all ages and the authors of this article feel that teachers need to become much more aware of the content they are reading to students. Teachers are a great part of the socialization process and by choosing certain books throughout the year, they are conveying values, sex roles, and what is important/unimportant.

Smith, Greenlaw, and Scott created a list of the most frequently read books in each grade (K-6). They listed the protagonist as male or female, next to each book.(see Appendix B). The results showed that in the primary grades(K-3), 73% of the stories have male main characters, 20% have female main characters, and 7% have both male and female main characters. The authors feel that possibly these selections convey the message that only boy stories may be exciting and interesting. In the intermediate grades, 64% of the stories chosen have male main characters, 24% female, and 12% male and female.

Smith, Greenlaw, and Scott concluded that teachers need to pay more attention to their selection of read aloud books. Teachers need to help curtail sex stereotyping and broaden children's views of roles that are available to them.

Mem Fox, the author of the 1993 article, "Men Who Weep, Boys Who Dance: The Gender Agenda Between The Lines in Children's Literature" believes that through literature, we (teachers, parents, and authors) have the power to change these sexist and gender appropriate behaviors. She points out that although there are other types of media conveying sexist and rasist messages, children learn to read in close contact with teachers and parents. Therefore, there are perfect opportunities for adults to point out limiting or predjudicial parts of stories. Perhaps we could open more doors for children and develop their full potentials. In addition to the occupations, Fox also incorporates a range of emotions for her characters. Children desperately need to realize that men and women do feel tender, understanding, angry, or upset and that doesn't make someone less of a person. Fox realized that perhaps she needed to change her ways as she wrote children's books. Subtlety she has introduced nontraditional roles/adjectives with her characters. For example, in a sampling of her own books, Fox mentions a boy babysitter with punk hair and leather, pirates who cry, and male adventurers who are helped by women. She points out that in being a writer, it is extremely important that she partake in the changes of society. Fox is aware that being alone in her job environment may be dangerous, because it would be easy

to lose touch with the outside world. Fox states that "Writers and publishers should acknowledge society's fast-changing attitudes about women, people of color, the elderly, and minorities. Being unaware is dangerous and arrogant."

After reviewing these many studies, certain themes are common throughout the conclusions. The studies have shown a definite lack of equal representation of women and men. This representation refers to the number of men and women depicted, emotions displayed by both sexes, and the occupations performed by men and women. Stereotypes have been created and still persist because publishers teachers, and authors don't take the time to criticize and reflect on what material and what messages are being conveyed to children. Women's roles in society have changed quite a bit over the last 30 years, and the stories/materials have had a hard time keeping up with the times. It is necessary and important that we periodically check these materials, or the stereotypes and limited role models will continue.

The basal reading series have changed quite a bit in just the last few years. More publishing companies are adopting a literature approach to reading. The companies claim to offer good literature, with a variety of listening, speaking, reading,and writing activities. Research needs to be conducted to determine whether, in fact, these claims are warranted.

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Women's Roles In Basal Readers: Appendices

Males and Females

Publishers are becoming sensitive to the need for literature that does not portray either sex in stereotypic roles. For example since 1981 the Houghton Mifflin Publishing Company's (18) guidelines for eliminating sex stereotypes in materials it publishes have included the following:

1 Published materials should present a balance of both sexes, including female and male protagonists, female and male contributors to society, and females and males in a variety of jobs. Stories should suggest that both females and males can prepare for and succeed in a variety of occupations.
2 Literature should recognize that males and females share the same basic emotions, personality traits, and capabilities. Both sexes should be included in portrayals of active pastimes and in solitary pursuits.
3 Sensitivity, taste, and nonstereotypic images should be employed when using humor to characterize the sexes.
4 Literature should present a broad range of historical references to women, including contributions of well-known and less well-known women.
5 Where appropriate, literature should include reference to legal, economic, and social issues related to women.
6 Historical books should include coverage of the roles and activities of women in past centuries.

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Books most frequently read aloud in each grade

Title	Protagonist
Kindergarten	
Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day	male
Charlotte's Web	female/male
Curious George	male
Clown of God	male
Corduroy	male
The Giving Tree	male
Katy No-Pocket	female
Little Bear	male
The Snowy Day	male
male: 80% female: 10% female/male: 10%	
1st grade	
Charlotte's Web	female/male
Where the Wild Things Are	male
Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day	male
Curious George	male
The Giving Tree	male
How the Grinch Stole Christmas	male
Millions of Cats	male
The Night Before Christmas	male
The Snowy Day	male
Winnie the Pooh	male
The Tale of Peter Rabbit	male
male: 91% female: 0% female/male: 9%	
2nd grade	
Charlotte's Web	female/male
The Mouse and the Motorcycle	male
Ramona the Pest	female
Where the Wild Things Are	male
Amelia Bedelia	female
Miss Nelson Is Missing	female
Ribsy	male
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	male
Curious George	male
Henry Huggins	male
The Three Billy Goats Gruff	male
male: 64% female: 27% female/male: 9%	
3rd grade	
Charlotte's Web	female/male
The Mouse and the Motorcycle	male
The Little House on the Prairie	female
James and the Giant Peach	male
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	male
Stuart Little	male
Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing	male
The Boxcar Children	female/male
Did You Carry the Flag Today, Charlie?	male
Encyclopedia Brown	male
Ramona Quimby, Age 8	female
Henry Huggins	male
male: 67% female: 17% female/male: 16%	

Continued on next page

4th grade	
Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing	male
Charlotte's Web	female/male
Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH	female
How to Eat Fried Worms	male
Peppermints in the Parlor	female
Summer of the Monkeys	male
The Trumpet of the Swan	male
Hugh Pine	male
Ida Early Comes Over the Mountain	male
James and the Giant Peach	male
Superfudge	male
Where the Red Fern Grows	male
male: 75% female: 17% female/male: 8%	
5th grade	
Charlotte's Web	female/male
Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing	male
Where the Red Fern Grows	male
Bridge to Teribithia	female/male
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	male
James and the Giant Peach	male
Summer of the Monkeys	male
The Best Christmas Pageant Ever	female/male
Call It Courage	male
Old Yeller	male
The Pinballs	female
Tom Sawyer	male
male: 67% female: 8% female/male: 25%	
6th grade	
Bridge to Teribithia	female/male
Summer of the Monkeys	male
The Great Gilly Hopkins	female
Island of the Blue Dolphins	female
Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH	female
The Pinballs	female
Where the Red Fern Grows	male
How to Eat Fried Worms	male
James and the Giant Peach	male
My Side of the Mountain	male
When Grandfather Journeys into Winter	male
male: 55% female: 36% female/male: 9%	